

JPL Year 2000 Readiness Handbook

A guide for home and family

Prepared by the JPL Year 2000 Project

September 9, 1999

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Introduction

The Year 2000 and You

There may be some problems associated with the change to the Year 2000. This is because the Y2K “problem” is related to computer technology, and technology touches much of what we do in our personal lives -- whether it is scanning grocery prices, pumping gas for our cars, connecting to the Internet or making a simple telephone call.

This *JPL Year 2000 Readiness Handbook* provides general guidance designed to help you understand the challenges you may face outside of the JPL environment and get you thinking about what you can do to prepare for what lies ahead. We have categorized information into three major areas:

- Home and Family
- Finance
- Government.

In each area we provide guidelines and identify some resources that can provide more in-depth information. Phone numbers and URLs are provided for these resources.

The Y2k-related information in this handbook and in the related internet sites may change as we near the end of 1999 and organizations continue to ready themselves for the rollover to 2000. We have included this handbook on the JPL public Y2k web site, and we will update it from time to time. We hope that it helps you prepare for and cope with Y2k problems that may occur.

In addition to this handbook, JPL has also created a public Year 2000 web site which can be accessed by anyone from the JPL home page, <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov> . It provides easy access to a number of informational items, useful tools, and other web sites related to the year 2000 problem. This handbook is also available at this site and updates, if required, will be posted there. The direct link for the Year 2000 site is <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/y2k> .

HOME AND FAMILY

As stated in the introduction, JPL expects some problems associated with the change to the Year 2000 and has developed a contingency plan to deal with any unexpected service or system failures. Although you probably will not experience major disruptions in services, it seems prudent to be alert to potential problems and have a plan to help cope with possible emergency situations.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross suggest that you not rely on emergency organizations for help in the event of Y2k problems, but should make your own contingency plans. This is familiar advice to JPL employees living in earthquake country. Individual preparedness is important in any emergency. Some "common sense" things we all should do are have batteries for flashlights and radios, a supply of water and non-perishable goods, and ensure that the car gas tank does not go below half full.

As you read through this handbook, it may be helpful to make a checklist of the areas that you anticipate might cause you and your family problems. Taking steps now to be prepared in those areas will give you some peace of mind if problems do occur.

FOOD, WATER AND INCIDENTALS

Food suppliers are dependent on computerized processing and information exchange for everything from irrigation and milking equipment to food processing assembly lines and refrigeration units. Computers control inventories and checkout systems. They all face potential Y2k problems if your grocer hasn't prepared adequately.

Local water districts rely on water from the California Aqueduct, distributed by the Metropolitan Water District, for a large percentage of their water. The California Bureau of Audits has raised concerns about California's water resources.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The American Red Cross Readiness Checklist

Their advice: Stock up as you would for a severe winter storm. In our case, stock up as you would for an earthquake. Give extra consideration to the special needs of those who depend on your daily support and assistance, e.g., elderly, children, pets, etc.

The California Office of Emergency Services suggests being prepared to be self-sufficient for three to seven days.

Water: A gallon per person, per day, stored in unbreakable plastic containers.

Food: Nonperishable edibles, plus ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables. For infants: formula, diapers, powdered milk.

Tools and supplies: These should include a flashlight, battery-operated radio, non-electric can opener, fire extinguisher, matches, signal flare, paper and pencil, plastic storage containers, aluminum foil, tape, whistle, needle and thread, plastic sheeting, local map (for locating shelters), paper plates, cups, plastic utensils, toilet paper, towelettes, liquid detergent, plastic garbage bags, disinfectant, personal hygiene items, and first aid supplies.

Clothing, bedding: One complete change of clothes and footwear per person, sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, hat and gloves, thermal underwear, blankets or sleeping bags in case your family must be evacuated.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/Y2k.html>

The Year 2000 information page for the American Red Cross

<http://www.oes.ca.gov>

The State of California Office of Emergency Services (select Y2k and Emergency Management)

<http://aqueduct.mwd.dst.ca.us/Y2k>

Metropolitan Water District's Y2k page

<http://www.bsa.ca.gov/bsa/pdfs/98116.pdf>

California Bureau of State Audits, Year 2000 Computer Problem: The State's Agencies Are Progressing Toward Compliance but Key Steps Remain Incomplete

<http://www.mwd.dst.ca.us/docs/members.htm>

List of local water districts dependent upon MWD

UTILITIES

There is potential for some disruption of service where JPL employees live. As of this writing, the status of various local utility companies (electricity, telephone service, natural gas, water, and sewer service) is unknown. You will probably hear from your utility companies as to their plans to ensure Y2k compliance.

Most big electric utilities have said that their "mission critical" systems would be Y2k compliant by June 30, and plan to do extensive testing thereafter.

Work continues on some telecommunications networks and other infrastructure. *The Washington Post* reports the Federal Communications Commission expects major companies, like AT&T, MCI Worldcom, Sprint, and regional phone companies to start next year in good shape. There could, however, be problems with smaller, mostly rural, telephone companies - and with telephone service in foreign countries. Both Pacific Bell and GTE telephone service providers have assured the Los Angeles County's Y2k leaders that there will be dial tone in 2000. Further, the 911 voice system will work.

Southern California Gas Company targeted June 30, 1999, for completion of its compliance activities.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- In case of power shortages, plan to use alternative cooking devices such as barbecues or camping stoves. Be sure your fuel supply is full. Do not use open flames or charcoal grills indoors.
- Have several flashlights and/or lanterns and a supply of fresh batteries on hand.

- Protect electronic equipment, especially computer equipment and TV/audio equipment, with surge protectors.
- If the power goes out in your area, turn off all the electric devices except for one lamp so that you will know when the power comes back on. This helps protect your home wiring from overheating as the power comes back on.
- If you plan to get a propane- or gasoline-driven electricity generator, observe the following cautionary notes:
 - ⇒ Install a bypass panel. A surge of electricity directly into a wall plug can ruin a home's wiring and/or start a fire. Also, power generated at home could feed back into the utility lines outside. The electricity could seriously injure or kill someone working on the supposedly dead lines.
 - ⇒ A generator should only be operated outdoors, and fuel should be stored outdoors in approved containers.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/Y2k.html>

The Year 2000 information page for the American Red Cross

<http://www.socalgas.com>

Southern California Gas, select the Y2k FAQ

http://www.sce.com/Y2ksca/index_y2.htm

Southern California Edison's Y2k page

<http://www.oes.ca.gov>

The State of California Office of Emergency Services (select Y2k and Emergency Management)

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Y2k/default.htm>

The California Public Utilities Commission

<http://www.bsa.ca.gov/bsa/pdfs/98116.pdf>

California Bureau of State Audits, Year 2000 Computer Problem: The State's Agencies Are Progressing Toward Compliance but Key Steps Remain Incomplete

<http://www.euY2k.com/newsroom.htm>

Electric Utilities and Y2K

<http://www.fcc.gov/year2000/Y2kcsr.html>

The Federal Communications Commission in conjunction with The Network Reliability & Interoperability Council, Y2K Communications Sector Report

<http://aqueduct.mwd.dst.ca.us/Y2k>

Metropolitan Water District's Y2K page

<http://www.mwd.dst.ca.us/docs/members.htm>

List of local water districts dependent upon MWD

<http://www.gte.com/customersupport/gte2000.html>

GTE's Y2K page

<http://www.sbc.com/year2000/>

PacBell's Y2K page

<http://flintspark.com/Y2kR/Y2kR.htm>

The Internet's Oldest & Largest Y2k-Euro Compliance Search Engine
& Portal

HEALTH CARE

Just about everyone has, or knows someone who has, health problems. Unfortunately, the health care industry is reportedly one of the slower industries to face the Year 2000 problem.

Biomedical devices use or incorporate computers, microprocessors, and embedded computer chips and may be vulnerable to Year 2000 problems. The potential danger ranges from little, if any, risk to the possibility of adverse health consequences. Manufacturers have been asked to identify, evaluate and report any Y2k-related problems in their entire lines of medical equipment and software. This information is on the FDA Internet site.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Schedule physical exams and elective medical procedures well before year-end.
- Refill mandatory prescriptions early and find alternate suppliers for insulin and other critical medications.
- Get Medic-Alert bracelets that indicate allergies and other life-threatening issues as a hedge against medical record systems that may not function properly.
- Request a copy of your family's medical and dental records.
- Don't forget those who are dependent on others in your family and who need special assistance and/or medications.
- Check with your local hospital and health care provider to see if they are Year 2000 compliant.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/yr2000/year2000.html>

Information about and link to the search engine of the Food and Drug Administration's Biomedical Equipment Year 2000 Status Database

<http://www.rx2000.org>

Rx2000 Solutions Institute, a nonprofit industry-supported information resource

<http://www.redcross.org/Y2K.html>

The Year 2000 information page for the American Red Cross

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/yr2000/consumers.html>

Y2k impact on biomedical equipment

HEALTH INSURANCE

Large private insurers and the Medicare system are spending millions to prepare for Y2k, but most, including Medicare. Medicare states that its computers are year 2000-ready, and that they are working with health care providers, suppliers, and the companies that handle Medicare bills and payments to be sure that their computers will be ready. Yet, it is possible that some computer billing and payment systems might be disrupted if one of the interconnected links is not Y2k compliant. Reimbursement for your claims could be delayed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Make sure you know where your proof of insurance eligibility is in case medical office systems encounter problems.
- Keep backup records of all information you exchange with your insurer, and be sure you understand their eligibility and reimbursement rules.
- Have some cash available in the event of computer problems, and be sure to keep receipts.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

Following are web pages for the insurance providers utilized by JPL employees:

<http://www.bluecrossca.com/>

Blue Cross of California

<http://www.ca.kaiserpermanente.org>

Kaiser Permanente

<http://www.cigna.com>

Cigna

<http://www.vsp.com>

VSP - Vision Service Plan

<http://www.deltadentalca.org>

Delta Dental

<http://eis.jpl.nasa.gov/hr/Benefits/sdi-dep.htm>

California Disability Insurance

<http://www.edd.cahwnet.gov/uiind.htm>

California Unemployment Insurance

<http://www.acs3.caltech.edu/HR/Benefits/default.htm>

Caltech Benefits Office

<http://www.medicare.gov>

Official U.S. Government site for Medicare Information

GOING BACK TO WORK IN 2000

JPL's first day of work in 2000 is Monday, January 3. For information related to the status of the Laboratory, call 1-818-354-8601 or 1-800-303-4575 for a recorded message. If telephone service is temporarily disrupted, bulletins via radio and TV may provide useful and relevant local information.

Other family members should check with their employers, too, to find out what their plan is for alerting employees to emergency conditions.

Develop back-up childcare plans for January 2000 in case schools or day care centers close because of power outages, inoperative security equipment or malfunctioning heating systems.

UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, AND SCHOOLS

Computer systems may mis-register some students or may not be able to calculate who is eligible for graduation. Further, schools and daycare centers will face the same challenges with utilities that you do.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- During 1999, obtain copies of all academic records for all family members. Remember, colleges and technical schools are affected, too. So, if you're thinking of doing job searching in early 2000, be sure to obtain copies of your transcripts in advance.
- Find out if your children's school has Y2k contingency plans.

CARS, TRUCKS and SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES

Manufacturers say most cars and trucks should start right up on January 1, 2000. Service managers at dealerships for U.S., Japanese and European cars confirm that computer systems in their cars generally track mileage or the number of engine starts, not months or years.

The availability of gasoline could possibly be affected by local or regional delivery problems. Most major oil companies were on schedule to be Y2k-ready by the end of 1998, but smaller, independent retailers may have trouble pumping gas or processing credit cards .

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Just to be safe, fill up your tank well before New Year's Eve, then be prepared to pay cash for gas at the beginning of 2000. Keep your tank at least half full during this critical period.
- Have routine vehicle service, including the replacement of wear-prone parts (belts, hoses, filters) done before year's end. Make sure your own service records are complete in case your repair shop loses your computer-stored maintenance records.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?AIMD-99-162>

US Government Accounting Agency (GAO) Report, Year 2000 Computing Crisis: Readiness of the Oil and Gas Industries. AIMD-99-162. 7 pp. plus 2 appendices (40 pp.) May 19, 1999.

<http://www.iea.org/ieaY2k/Y2khome.htm>

IEA Draft Working Paper: The Year 2000 Problem and the Oil Industry
International Energy Agency page on the Oil Industry and the Year 2000 Problem

CONSUMER PRODUCTS and HOME APPLIANCES

In a comprehensive review published last year, *The Washington Post* concluded that most household appliances and electronic devices will make an uneventful transition to the next century. According to the *Post*,

- Kitchen appliances, such as coffeemakers, microwave ovens, dishwashers and refrigerators, should be OK because their internal clocks don't track days, weeks, months or years. The same is true for home security systems.
- Home heating and air conditioning systems should continue to perform as well as they do on December 31, 1999. Programmable thermostats shouldn't have Year 2000-related problems either.
- If the supporting telecommunications networks remain operational, most telephones, cellular phones, pagers and fax machines should work. Some high-tech answering machines have embedded chips and may not time stamp your phone calls properly, but should continue to function otherwise.

The Consumer Institute on Appliances lists the following items that may be affected:

- Clocks: May incorrectly match day/date. Adjust as necessary.
- Electronic Organizers: Older models may have calendar problems, but newer models are likely to be compliant. Check with retailer/manufacturer, or check it yourself by advancing the calendar into 2000.

- Video Cassette Recorders (VCRs). Many pre-1992 models work on 7-, 14- or 30-day calendars so will be unaffected, although a few models from this period may not match the day and date correctly. If it is not possible to adjust the date independently of the day, try setting the year to 1972; like 2000, 1972 is a leap year, and a year in which the days of the week fell on the same dates as they will in 2000. Models manufactured in 1992 and after should be unaffected as they incorporate four-digit year timers.
- Cameras: Older cameras that record the date on photographs may have calendars that only run to 1999 and then reset to the calendar start date. An incorrect date will be shown on the photograph but other functions of the camera will not be affected.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Replace non-compliant equipment only if displaying the correct date is critical -- say, on a fax machine used to transmit legal documents.
- Make sure your home security company can protect you in 2000.
- Check your homeowner or renter insurance policy for any exclusions due to Year 2000-related causes.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.cpsc.gov/about/Y2k.html>

The Y2K Frequently Asked Questions page for the Consumer Product Safety Commission

<http://www.consumer.org.nz/consumer/jan98-2000app.html>

The Consumer Institute's Year 2000 Appliance page

PERSONAL COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE

Personal computer users must be concerned about four things: the hardware (BIOS), the operating system (OS), the application software they use, and their data files.

Macintosh users shouldn't have a hardware problem. Macintosh Operating Systems versions 7.5.5, 7.6.1, 8.1, 8.5, and 8.5.1 are Y2k compliant. Earlier versions must be updated, according to Apple

PC users should check both their hardware (BIOS) and operating system for Y2k compliance. For Microsoft products, go to their Y2k site, <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/tools/readines.htm> for useful guidance and tools.

For both Microsoft application software and operating system software, Microsoft has a free CD-ROM, which you can order from <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/y2kcd.htm>

Users of operating systems and applications from other vendors, including Internet service providers, check compliance at the their web sites.

You should refer to guidance on the vendors' web sites for guidance on ensuring that data files created by their applications are Y2k compliant.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Use commercially available tools (see below) to test your home PC hardware and software for Y2k compliance.
 - Use caution when using Y2k test programs or procedures on your home computer. Some may cause your applications to act strangely, lose data or expire. Always back up data and close applications before any testing or installing
- Verify that your Internet Service Provider (ISP) is taking the necessary steps to provide uninterrupted service.
- Make hard copies of all crucial financial, legal, and medical documents before year end.

OTHER YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

http://www.nstl.com/html/nstl_ymark2000.html

A free, commercially available tool called YMARK2000 which can be downloaded and used to test your PC's (not Macs) BIOS.

http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/Y2k/vendor/vendors_a.html

An alphabetical listing of commercial software vendor Year 2000 web pages. Includes Public Domain Software and Shareware.

TRAVEL

The readiness of the transportation industry varies, with larger companies likely to be better prepared. In any event, it will be prudent to plan for potential disruptions. Even if airplanes, buses and trains roll, reservation and baggage handling systems may malfunction.

Other countries are behind the United States on addressing the Year 2000 issue. You may encounter longer-than-usual delays, cancellations and complications if traveling, particularly if going abroad.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Consider staying home or close to home over the holiday weekend. Arrange longer trips to occur before or a week or two after the holiday weekend.
- Consider trip cancellation insurance. It might be more valuable this year.
- If possible, avoid scheduling work-related travel in the first week or two of January 2000. If your unit is planning workshops, conferences or meetings involving travel for some or all participants, avoid scheduling such events in early 2000 wherever possible

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.Y2Ktransport.dot.gov>

The Department of Transportation web site with information about Year 2000 progress involving air, rail, water, and highway transportation.

<http://www.faaY2K.com>

The Federal Aviation Administration's Year 2000 web site.

http://www.amtrak.com/news/pr/at98164_gov.html

Testimony to Senate Committee about Amtrak's Year 2000 readiness.

FINANCES

YOUR JPL PAYCHECK

JPL is confident it will be able to pay employees without interruption when the new year arrives. The system was successfully tested earlier this year and will be re-tested prior to year-end to verify our continuing ability to calculate employees' pay, and to pay everyone on time. The final paycheck of 1999 will be delivered Wednesday, December 22, and the first paycheck of the new year will be delivered on Friday, January 7, 2000.

CASH

ATM's are expected to be working as 2000 begins, but it would be prudent to have some extra cash on hand, and to draw it out well in advance of December 31, 1999. If your bank, grocery store, gas station, doctor's office, etc, experiences Y2k problems, you may have to pay cash for services. Be sure to keep receipts for medical expenses so you can get reimbursed.

BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS

The Federal Reserve has contingency plans to assist banks that have computer problems in January 2000. The nation's largest banks will probably have their systems ready, but smaller banks may not. Be particularly careful with smaller banks and those with state charters; many could be behind schedule. Credit unions--which hold \$345 billion in assets and to which one of every four Americans belong--have been criticized by the U S Government Accounting Office for not doing enough. The Caltech Employees Federal Credit Union reports it has completed testing and is fully Year 2000-ready.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To reduce the risks of losing access to your funds, being harried by inaccurate statements and encountering delays in clearing checks and deposits:

- Find out if your bank or credit union is Y2k-ready. Check back periodically for an update of its progress.

- If your financial institution can't assure you it will be Year 2000-ready, look for one that can.
- Make sure ATM transactions and direct deposits are correctly recorded. Save transaction receipts and pay statements and check them carefully against your account statement.
- Have some extra cash on hand. Keep cash in a safe place and accumulate it in small amounts at a time, well in advance of 12/31/99. Or consider travelers' checks.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.cefcu.org>

Check the Caltech Employees Federal Credit Union for Y2k progress, tips, and information.

<http://www.ffiec.gov/Y2K>

Details about the Y2k regulatory efforts for financial institutions

<http://www.bog.frb.fed.us/Y2K>

Year 2000-related initiatives of the Federal Reserve Board.

INVESTMENTS - RETIREMENT PLANS

Each JPL 403(b) retirement plan provider has a web site where you can read about their plans to be ready for Year 2000.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

Following are web pages for the various JPL/Caltech retirement plan providers:

<http://www.tiaa-cref.org>

TIAA/CREF

<http://www.prudential.com>

Prudential Investments

<http://www.fid-inv.com>

Fidelity Investments

INVESTMENTS - BROKERS AND MUTUAL FUNDS

The Securities and Exchange Commission is taking the Year 2000 bug seriously - and making sure the mutual fund industry does, too. In September 1998, SEC Commissioner Laura Unger told a Senate Special Committee the mutual fund industry is preparing to meet the Year 2000 challenge in a timely manner. "We believe that, in addition to the commission's actions and other government initiatives, the disciplining effect of market forces and self interest will promote Year 2000 compliance in the mutual fund industry. We will continue to evaluate the status of the industry's readiness," she said. "If we find deficiencies, we will aggressively address them with the funds and their investment advisers, conduct further examinations and, as appropriate, bring enforcement actions."

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- To assess the Y2k effect on a company you invest in, ask:
 - ⇒ What percent of its essential and embedded computer systems have been renovated and tested, and when will the process be completed?
 - ⇒ What are the estimated amounts and timing of its costs to become compliant?
 - ⇒ Are they taking part in the Securities Industry Association's industry-wide testing during 1999 and reporting the results?
- Keep detailed records, backed up with at least a year's worth of statements and receipts. If you have check writing privileges with the account, save your returned checks.
- Get assurances that the firms that manage your investment accounts will be able to execute trades efficiently and post transactions promptly and accurately.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.sec.gov/news/home2000.htm>

The SEC and the Year 2000

http://www.sia.com/year_2000/index.html

The Securities Industry Association and the Year 2000

MORTGAGES

Your mortgage company may have some computer problems, either with calculating interest or determining the number of remaining payments.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Ask your mortgage lender now for a statement detailing the payments of interest and principal you've made to date, along with a monthly payment schedule showing how the balance of your loan will amortize until it's paid off. In addition, hold on to all canceled checks as proof of payments.
- If you have an adjustable-rate mortgage, make sure you have a copy of the original loan documents that spell out how your new rate and monthly payment will be determined.
- Inspect your payment receipts in January/February 2000 to make sure payments were credited properly and the remaining balance matches your expectations.

CREDIT CARDS and CREDIT REPORTS

The most widely used credit bureaus, Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, all say they will be prepared. Most major issuers of credit cards have processes in place to properly deal with the Year 2000 issue. However, some merchants still have point-of-sale systems that can't properly process cards with 2000+ dates.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Ask merchants if their point-of-sale system can, and will be able to, accept cards with 2000+ dates.
- Get assurance from your issuing bank that the century change won't affect either their billing system or the way they calculate interest due.
- Retain paper copies of all credit card statements and credit reports from a major credit bureau.

- To protect yourself, obtain two copies of your credit report from each of the three most-popular credit bureaus. Order one in 1999, and correct any errors. Order a second copy after the Year 2000. Compare the two, and report any credit bureau errors or erroneous data submitted by any creditors.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.equifax.com/resources/Y2k.html>, 800-685-1111

<http://www.experian.com/corporate/Y2k/index.html>, 800-682-7654

<http://www.transunion.com/default.asp?Folder=FactBook>, 800-916-8800

INSURANCE

If your home, auto or life insurance policies are issued by a large national company, your Y2k risks may be minimal. Larger companies were expected to have their systems fixed by the end of 1998 and planned 1999 for testing. But be wary of small regional insurers, which supply coverage for about 30 percent of Americans. Some smaller insurers are said to be behind in their efforts.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Ask your insurance agent for a statement in writing what your insurer will be Y2k-ready. Also ask for written confirmation that your policies are active and keep on file a copy of all policies, detailing coverage, premiums paid and waivers.
- Ask your state insurance commissioner or state insurance department for information about your insurer's status. Ask if they have a status report about your insurer's readiness.
- Research insurance company ratings to determine if Year 2000 efforts will have an impact on the company's ability to insure your life and property.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

<http://www.insurance.ca.gov/docs/index.html>

California Department of Insurance

GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL SECURITY

Workers do not have to be concerned about their earnings records or benefit payments, as the Social Security system was reported as 100% compliant at the end of 1998.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Check the accuracy of your Social Security Personal Earnings and Benefits Estimate Statement. You can request statements for you and all wage earners in your family on the Internet, by phone at (800) 772-1213 or at local Social Security offices. Starting in October 1999, Social Security will automatically be sending an annual statement to all workers 25 or older about 3 months before their birthday.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

- <http://www.ssa.gov> - Social Security Online, the official web site of the Social Security Administration.
- <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-7004.html>
The Request for Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statement (SSA-7004) form is available here. Obtain a statement of your lifetime earnings and an estimate of your benefits, order publications, apply for Social Security benefits, find the nearest Social Security office and perform any of the other 10 most requested services.

TAXES

The Internal Revenue Service had a goal of attaining 100% Y2k compliance by January 1, 1999. It is still conceivable, however that unexpected problems could be encountered. Various state and local systems for taxes may also encounter problems. Income and property tax, payroll and retirement systems, and motor vehicle registrations could all be affected in some way.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Try to make sure the IRS and state taxing authorities don't owe you money for tax year 1999.
- Save copies of all tax returns and canceled checks.
- Keep your last December 1999 pay statement showing all taxes that were withheld for the year.
- Save proof that your mortgage company has paid all real estate taxes.

YEAR 2000-RELATED RESOURCES

- <http://www.irs.gov>
The Digital Daily, the official web site of the IRS
- <http://www.ftb.ca.gov>
Official web site for the California Franchise Tax Board.

MORE INFORMATION

JPL'S YEAR 2000 PROJECT

The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is operated by Caltech under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The Laboratory initiated investigation of potential Y2k problems as early as January 1996. Further, as part of NASA, JPL was given an early directive to identify potential problems and implement solutions far in advance of the year 2000. In response, JPL formed a Year 2000 (Y2K) Project Office to ensure that no internal or external JPL commitments will be interrupted due to the Year 2000 problem. The project has overall responsibility for ensuring that all JPL software, hardware and firmware is fully compliant with the requirements that both NASA and JPL have established.

During the past year, the Laboratory created an extensive Year 2000 inventory, including JPL-developed software items and commercial off-the-shelf products. Approximately 28 million lines of computer code were screened with a JPL-developed search tool. JPL has completed almost all required renovation, validation and installation in order for its systems to be Year 2000 compliant. Testing and final certification efforts are now well underway. In addition, JPL's employees are checking their own desktop computers for compliance. Finally, a business continuity and contingency plan has been developed for the Laboratory as a whole to try to prepare for any unexpected disruption of services or systems on January 1, 2000.

The lessons learned from the activities of the JPL Year 2000 Project that can be applied to the world outside JPL include:

- Concerns over potential effects of Y2k problems are appropriate. Test results indicate that Year 2000 problems do exist in some hardware, software and firmware. Thus some computer-based systems could fail to operate properly on January 1, 2000 if not corrected in advance.
- In several cases where a Year 2000 problem was found to exist, it was not obvious that the application "cared about the date." Vendor disclosure or testing, or both, was necessary to determine the compliance of the item.

- Items that test positive for Year 2000 problems needed to be assessed for the type of impact that could result. Although some minor cosmetic problems may be safely ignored, most affected items needed to be repaired, replaced or retired.

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES

<http://www.Y2K.gov>

The President's Council on Year 2000 conversion, with links to government and private-sector web sites

<http://www.co.la.ca.us/Y2k/default.htm>

Los Angeles County's Y2k page

<http://www.zdnet.com/enterprise/zdY2k>

How the Year 2000 affects computers, with links to PC Magazine, PC Computing, and other sites

<http://www.2k-times.com>

Articles, papers, links and reviews

<http://www.Y2K.com>

News, links and diagnostics

<http://www.year2000.com>

Year 2000 Information Center

<http://www.russkelly.com>

Year 2000 awareness and solutions

<http://www.ktla.com>

Radio station KTLA - Earthquake preparedness info and tips

<http://www.redcross.org>

American Red Cross - information on emergency preparedness

<http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov/mks/yr2000/Y2khome.htm>

U.S. Federal Government Gateway for Year 2000 Directories

<http://www.Y2kwomen.com>

Helpful household hints for Y2k, such as checklists and finding space for storing all those supplies

<http://domestic.bug2000.co.uk>

British web site on Y2k in the home

<http://www.yardeni.com>

A view of Y2k from an economic perspective

<http://www.year2000.com>

The Year 2000 Information Center provides a forum for disseminating information about the year 2000 problem.

<http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov/mks/yr2000/Y2khome.htm>

U.S. Federal Government Gateway for Year 2000 information directories sponsored by the General Services Administration offers a vast resource for Y2k issues.

<http://www.senate.gov/~Y2k/index.html>

United States Senate Special Committee on the Year 2000 Technology Problem.

<http://www.senate.gov/~Y2k/index.html>

The Year 2000 Information Center. On this web site, it is possible to subscribe to e-mail announcements of new postings.



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